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Application/Control Number: 10/734,144 Page 2

Art Unit: 3747

## **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

1. Claims 1-16 are allowed over the prior art of record.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The primary reason for allowance of claims 1, 9 and their extended claims is the claimed subject matter regarding "a determining device which determines that there is disconnection in the cell when the electric current flowing in the cell is smaller than the predetermined electric current during the period in which the predetermined electric current should flow in the cell" which the prior art references did not disclose.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to HIEU T. VO whose telephone number is 571-272-4854. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 2nd Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, HENRY C. YUEN can be reached on 571-272-4856. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Application/Control Number: 10/734,144

Art Unit: 3747

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Hu The U HIEU T. VO Primary Examiner

Page 3

Art Unit 3747 |2/12/04

HTV